

Making it Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories

Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories tells the stories of 32 schools and school districts that implemented innovative approaches to improve the nutritional quality of foods and beverages offered and sold on school campuses outside of school meals. The approaches were designed to help students make choices consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. They were derived from the Priorities for Action in the *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity*, CDC guidelines for school programs to promote healthy eating, guidance provided by USDA through its Team Nutrition program, and current practices in school nutrition. *Making It Happen!* is a joint project of the Food and Nutrition Service of USDA and the Division of Adolescent and School Health of CDC/DHHS, and is supported by the Department of Education.

The *Making It Happen!* success stories illustrate a wide variety of approaches that schools and school districts can take to improve student nutrition and “competitive foods,” the foods and beverages offered outside federally regulated school meal programs. **The most consistent theme emerging from the stories is that students will buy and consume healthful foods and beverages—and schools can make money from healthful options.**

The six approaches highlighted in *Making It Happen!* are:

1. Establish nutrition standards for competitive foods.
2. Influence food and beverage contracts.
3. Make more healthful foods and beverages available.
4. Adopt marketing techniques to promote healthful choices.
5. Limit student access to competitive foods.
6. Use fundraising activities and rewards that support student health.

Making It Happen shows how schools can make the healthy choice the easy choice for students.

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The *Making It Happen!* stories are supported by examples of actual policies, regulations, letters to parents, nutrition standards, nutrition resources, and contact information from the schools and districts. All the information is designed to establish healthy school nutrition environments as a normal expectation of schools. *Making It Happen!* includes a form that invites readers to send in their success stories to be added to the on-line version of the publication.

Improving the school nutrition environment is critically important because, as one principal said, “You cannot put a price on the benefits of good nutrition.” While initiating and implementing change may seem challenging, *Making It Happen!* shows that it can be done, with positive results. A student at a *Making It Happen!* school captured the spirit when she said, “We can do anything! If we have a goal, we can meet it.”

Print copies will be sent to all recipients of USDA’s *Changing the Scene* kit, Child Nutrition State Agencies, Action for Healthy Kids State Teams, as well as CDC grantees involved in school nutrition and health. In addition, it is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/nutrition/Making-It-Happen> and www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/makingithappen.html.